



FRAME PROJECTS

London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel

Report of Planning Application Review Meeting: Stour Road

Wednesday 20 July 2022
via video conference

Panel

Peter Bishop (chair)
John O'Mara

Attendees

Anne Ogundiya	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Pippa Henshall	London Legacy Development Corporation
Kuljeet Sibia	London Legacy Development Corporation
Patrycja Karas	Frame Projects
Cindy Reriti	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Anthony Hollingsworth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Catherine Smyth	LLDC Planning Policy and Decisions Team
Jerry Bell	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Jane Jin	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Deborah Denner	Frame Projects

Note on process:

The Quality Review Panel comments below follow on from one pre-application review. Panel members who attended the previous meeting were: Peter Bishop (chair); Shashank Jain; Mike Martin; Ed McCann; John O'Mara.

1. Project name and site address

Stour Road, Phase 2, Former Piano Factory, Stour Road, Stratford, London, E3 2NT

2. Presenting team

Craig Linnell	Henley Halebrown
Rebecka Gullstrand	Jonathan Cook Landscape Architects
Thomas Bender	Montagu Evans
Tom Slingsby	Southern Grove
Tom Morgan	Direct Access
David Lewis	Motion
Chris Benham	Knight Frank
James Bylina	Knight Frank

3. Planning authority briefing

The site, which is approximately 0.25 hectares in size, is located in Fish Island, situated in the north east of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The site comprises part of a wider street block bound to the north by Beachy Road, to the east and south by Stour Road and to the West by Smeed Road. The site comprises a series of single storey storage / warehouse buildings with associated yard space alongside a three-storey Boiler House and a stock brick chimney stack. A brick wall runs along the site's northern, southern and western boundaries. The single storey warehouse buildings are understood to be in use for storage and distribution (use class B8), with the Boiler House being used as an office (use class E(g)(i)). The site sits within the Fish Island and White Post Lane Conservation Area and has a public transport accessibility level rating of two, which is considered 'poor'.

The proposal is for a mixed-use development comprising 204 room purpose-built student accommodation and B1c business space (1,854 m² (GIA)), within buildings of five to seven storeys. It is the applicant's intention that the proposed purpose-built student accommodation would be occupied by a higher education institution likely to be the University of Arts London, through a nominations agreement secured by way of s106 legal agreement, in line with relevant planning policy.

Officers would welcome the panel's comments on refinements made, in response to its previous comments, and whether the proposals meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy BN.5.

4. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The panel finds much to admire in the proposals and feels that the development will make a positive contribution to both the townscape and the community of Fish Island. It considers that the proposals meet the criteria for exceptional design, as set out under Local Plan Policy BN.5, providing exemplary Purpose Built Student Accommodation, in a building of distinction with well-considered landscape design. Minor comments are offered for the design team to consider, in regard to façade treatment and further improvements to student liveability, as detailed design progresses.

High-quality materials and carefully considered detailing will be essential to the success of the scheme, and the panel supports planning officers' use of planning conditions to help ensure the design team's involvement through to delivery of the scheme onsite.

Scale and massing

- The panel commends the design team on the contribution that the scheme will make to the wider townscape of Fish Island.
- In particular, it welcomes the sinuous brick form and clerestory that envelop the stairwell of the commercial building in the north corner of the site, 'producing a building of distinction that turns the corner from Beachy Road into Stour Road, without scale'.

Landscape and public realm

- The panel feels that the public realm and landscape work well. It welcomes the provision of the yard, which provides a good setting for the chimney, and will bring activation and vibrancy to the area.
- The public space, at the corner of Beachy Road and Stour Road, introduces a welcome breathing space to the neighbourhood. The panel suggests that the proposed cycle parking, on the corner, would be better located in the courtyard, where it will be naturally surveilled.

Architecture and materiality

- The panel supports the development of the proposed elevational treatments, and welcomes the design improvements made to the elevations fronting onto the yard.
- Due consideration should be given to the chimney, when deciding the tonality of the new brickwork, to ensure that the old and new complement each other.

- High-quality materials and carefully considered detailing will be essential to the success of the scheme, and the panel supports planning officers' use of planning conditions to help ensure the design team's involvement through to the delivery of the proposals onsite.

Quality of student bedrooms

- The panel welcomes the increase in the size of the student bedrooms and their improved layout. Moving the beds away from the window creates a high-quality living space that affords students direct access to the window and views to the outside.
- The panel welcomes any further improvements that can be made to increase the amount of storage space available to students. A unified joinery treatment could be considered, to incorporate and maximise the wardrobe, shelf, and desk storage spaces.
- Similarly, any further enhancements that can be made to include a cloak space in the entrance area of the student bedrooms, particularly the wheelchair accessible units, would enhance liveability.

Plan, layout and use

- The panel feels that the entrance sequence works well. It welcomes the consideration that the design team has given to the everyday journey of the students, to determine the location of the cycle storage and lifts in relation to the entrance off Stour Road.
- It commends the client's generosity in providing affordable workspace, at a peppercorn rent, for the Stour Trust and the University of the Arts London.

Next steps

- The Quality Review Panel supports approval for the planning application for the development at Stour Road; this promises to be an exemplar scheme.